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Elections and Government Services  
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# ELECTION 2016

Preparing for a Presidential Election - #BeReady16

Montana Association of Clerks and Recorders and Election Administrators  
August 9, 2016

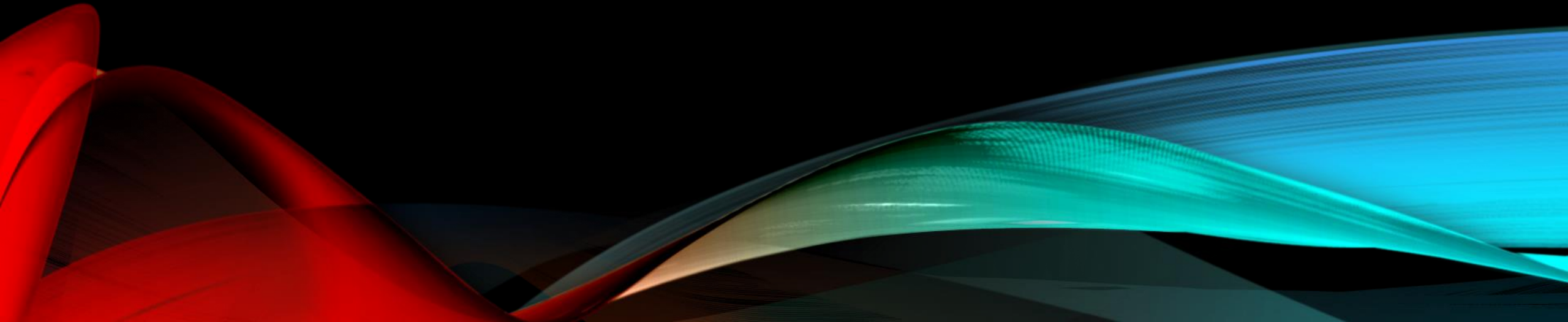
# ELECTION 2016

PREPARING FOR ELECTION DAY  
ELECTION DAY ISSUES  
ELECTION SECURITY  
USPS



ELECTION 2016

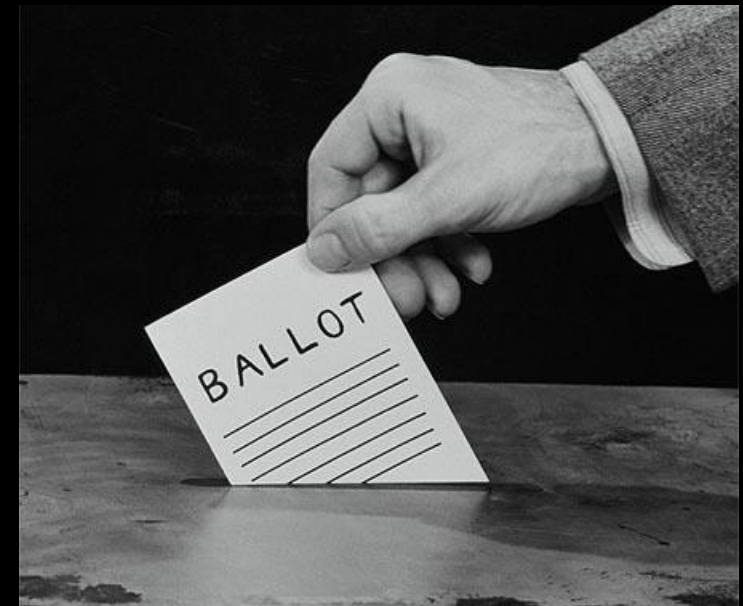
PREPARING FOR ELECTION DAY



# ELECTION 2016

- An important thing to remember when planning and preparing:

## Election Day is for the Voter....



- **Planning and Preparation: Minding Your P's and Q's**

- For a presidential election to be successful (which in turn makes our profession well regarded and respected), consider the following “P” words:

- Planning and Preparation

- Policies and Procedures



☑ PLAN  
☑ PREPARE  
☑ PERFORM

# ELECTION 2016

## Planning and Preparation

- ★ Election officials have to plan well for all contingencies of any election about what must happen legally or procedurally and what can occur that is not normal in the process.
  - ★ Planning and prioritizing are essential for success
  - ★ Thinking through what could happen out of the ordinary helps to avert the chance events that could derail an election.



- ✓ PLAN
- ✓ PREPARE
- ✓ PERFORM

ELECTION 2016

Proper planning makes the difference in  
how smoothly the election works for  
voters:

**Proper Planning Prevents Poor Performance!**

# ELECTION 2016

- **Proper Planning** helps to alleviate stress associated with conducting a presidential election
  - ★ Have an emergency and contingency plan (also called a “continuity of operations plan”).
  - ★ Try to anticipate and plan for any emergency or contingency





# ELECTION 2016

## **Planning and Preparation:** Election Day Emergency and Contingency Plans

- ★ Things we have some control over
  - ★ Ballot shortages
    - ★ Order ballots based on Active and Inactive voters, expected late and EDR registrants, expected provisional voters and expected larger than normal turnout
  - ★ Poll worker shortages
    - ★ Recruit and train more than needed
    - ★ Try to recruit government workers

# ELECTION 2016

## Planning and Preparation: Election Day Emergency and Contingency Plans

- ★ Things we have some control over
  - ★ Equipment issues
    - ★ Equipment testing – do acceptance testing as soon as equipment, media and ballots are received, in addition to any public and election day testing required **TEST TEST TEST**
  - ★ Technical Support availability
  - ★ Troubleshooting guide available
  - ★ Use security seals and a seal log to monitor access and prevent unauthorized access – **USE OF SEALS AND A SEAL LOG PROTECTS YOU!**



Uniform  
Ballot and  
Voting System  
Procedures  
Guide

Security, Testing,  
Inventory Control and  
Troubleshooting

Montana Secretary of State  
Linda McCulloch  
Updated September 2015

# ELECTION 2016

## Planning and Preparation: Election Day Emergency and Contingency Plans

- ★ Things we have some control over
  - ★ Election Day lines
    - ★ Learn from past elections
    - ★ Redesign flow of polls if necessary
    - ★ Have officials working lines to ensure people are in the correct line, etc.
    - ★ Use resource allocation tools to make decisions on how to allocate limited resources
    - ★ Communicate length of lines throughout the day to press, public using social media, radio, whatever options may be available



# ELECTION 2016

## Planning and Preparation: Election Day Emergency and Contingency Plans

- ★ Things we don't have control over
  - ★ Weather related issues
    - ★ Poll workers and/or voters cannot get to the polls
    - ★ Blizzard conditions/excess snow that needs to be plowed shoveled for safety and access
    - ★ Weather disasters such as hurricanes, floods, etc.
    - ★ Courts may delay closing polls – have officials prepared for this contingency
    - ★ Communicate updates often

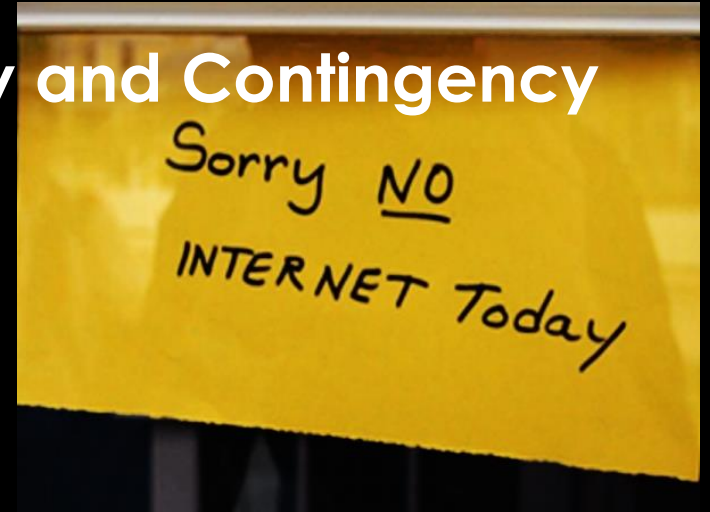


# ELECTION 2016

## Planning and Preparation: Election Day Emergency and Contingency Plans

### Things we don't have control over

- ★ Power outages: Electricity/Internet/Phones
  - ★ Have a plan to make sure voters continue voting
  - ★ Manually issue ballots – provisional ballots
  - ★ Paper registers/poll books
  - ★ Plan for back-up power
  - ★ Use mobile phone numbers
  - ★ Have mobile and after hours contact information for all providers
- ★ Voting Equipment Issues
  - ★ How to report; who to report to
  - ★ Be prepared for media inquiries
    - ★ Make sure a knowledgeable person is designated to talk about equipment issues to media





# ELECTION 2016

## **Planning and Preparation: Election Day Emergency and Contingency Plans**

### **Things we don't have control over**

#### Personnel Issues

- ★ Cross train in case something prevents key-personnel from being available
- ★ Have mobile and after hour numbers for local election officials and all state elections staff
- ★ Share all processes and procedures, put them in writing and make them accessible to all key staff in case something happens to YOU

# ELECTION 2016

## Planning and Preparation

- ★ Keep lists
- ★ Draft FAQs and uniform responses for common inquiries from public, press, candidates, etc.
- ★ Coordinate calendars
- ★ Training for poll workers
  - ★ Have refresher online courses



# ELECTION 2016



## • Policies and Procedures

- ★ What to do, when to do it and why it is necessary to do it a certain way, are concerns of every election office.
- ★ Training, training, training of staff, of election workers, of the voters, of the media, of the campaigns, about why the procedures and practices exist and how they protect the process is essential to a well-run election.
- ★ When election officials get in trouble, it is usually because someone in the process did not follow the established procedures and practices.

# ELECTION 2016

## Have Written Policies

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### Uniform Ballot and Voting System Procedures Guide

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Security, Testing,  
Inventory Control and  
Troubleshooting

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Montana Secretary of State  
Linda McCulloch  
Updated September 2015

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## Polling Place Situations Quick Guide

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*Montana Secretary of State  
Linda McCulloch  
Elections and Government  
Services*

Updated October 2013



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### Montana Statewide Recount Guide

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Montana Secretary of  
State Linda McCulloch

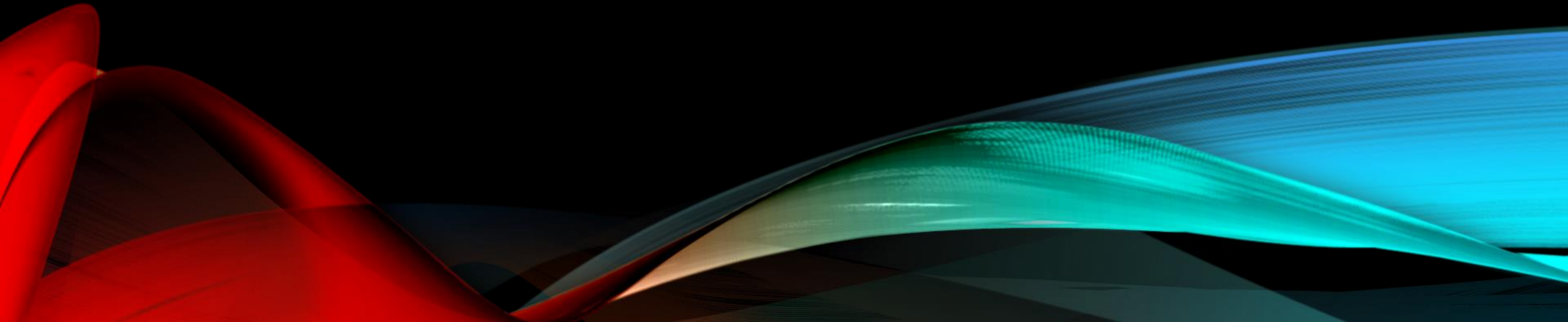
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Elections and Government Services Division  
February 2012

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ELECTION DAY ISSUES





# ELECTION 2016

- **What kinds of voter specific Election Day issues can you prepare for by having policies and procedures in place:**
  - Poll workers are faced with issues constantly on Election Day
  - Resolution of each issue affects a voter's right to vote
  - Resolution must be uniform and accurate
  - In addition to the Election Judge Handbook publication we provide, we also publish a "*polling place situations quick guide*" with various scenarios and the resolution to each scenario described
  - While it is probably impossible to anticipate every potential scenario, it is extremely helpful to anticipate as many as we can, and to train local election officials and poll workers and give them every possible tool so that they can confidently and competently address these scenarios

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- **What kinds of voter specific issues come up on Election Day that you can anticipate and prepare locals and poll workers for?**
  - Voter doesn't have ID
  - Voter's name is not in register/poll book
  - Voter was already issued an absentee ballot
  - Voter is in Inactive status
  - Voter is challenged
  - Voter is not able to sign the register
  - Voter makes a mistake on their ballot
  - Election Day Registration issues



# ELECTION 2016



## Election Day

### ★Communications:

- ★Phones need to be manned on election day AND on the days following election day

- ★The public, other counties, SOS, media

- ★Make sure election staff know what to report to you.

- ★Make sure that poll workers know when to contact you, and specifically who to contact.

- ★Identify ahead of time issues staff need to run up the chain of command.

### ★Dealing with Election Day complaints:

- ★Who handles candidate and voter complaints about campaigns and/or election law violations?

# Poll Watchers

# ELECTION 2016

## Election Day

- ★ Have a plan for Poll Watchers, Observers and Exit Polling:
  - ★ Candidate observers vs. other “public interest groups”
  - ★ Role of poll workers in enforcing laws and regulations
- ★ Voter fraud/suppression complaints
  - ★ Use SOS “Fair Elections Center”



 **Montana Fair Elections Center**  
SECRETARY OF STATE LINDA McCULLOCH  
*Committed to Safe and Secure Elections in Montana*

**How to Report Potential Election Law Violation**

There are five methods available for reporting a potential election law violation:

- File a Potential Election Law Violation Report online via the web form below.
- [Download](#) and email a report of the activity you witnessed to: [fairelections@mt.gov](mailto:fairelections@mt.gov)
- Contact a member of my elections staff at (406) 444-4239.
- [Download](#) and fax a report of the Potential Election Law Violation Report to (406) 444-4249.
- [Download](#) and mail a Potential Election Law Violation Report to the address below:

**Mailing Address:**  
Secretary of State Linda McCulloch  
Fair Elections Center  
P.O. Box 202801  
Helena, Montana 59620-2801

**Online Submission Form**

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## Election Day

### ★ Have a plan for Long Lines

- ★ What if the weather is inclement?
- ★ What about elderly, those with young children?
- ★ Have voter registration forms at a pre-registration table or on clipboards
- ★ Have officials monitoring lines to make sure people are in correct lines
- ★ Have separate absentee ballot drop-off area so that people don't have to stand in line to drop off absentee ballots
- ★ Have provisional supplies organized and have well-trained officials



# ELECTION 2016

## Election Day

### ★Collect Data on Line Length

Form 2

#### Line Length Data Collection Sheet

County, Montana

November 8, 2016

Precinct number/name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions.** Please use this sheet to record the following at the indicated times:

- The number of voters waiting to check in to vote
- The number of poll books available to accept voter check-ins
- The number of voters who are waiting to mark their ballot
- The number of voting booths available where a voter can mark a ballot

If there is no one standing in line at the indicated time, please enter a zero ("0"). If you are unable to record the line length at a particular time, enter an "X" in the corresponding space.

Time	Waiting to check in		Waiting to mark the ballot	
	Number in line	Number of poll books	Number in line	Number of voting booths
When polls open*				
7:00 a.m.				
8:00 a.m.				
9:00 a.m.				
10:00 a.m.				
11:00 a.m.				
12:00 noon				
1:00 p.m.				
2:00 p.m.				
3:00 p.m.				
4:00 p.m.				
5:00 p.m.				
6:00 p.m.				

# Election Day Results Reporting

- ★ Centralized results reporting in MT

- ★ Upload/enter results in eSERS FIRST!

- ★ This is the State of Montana's official results site. Media should not have results before the official state results site is updated.

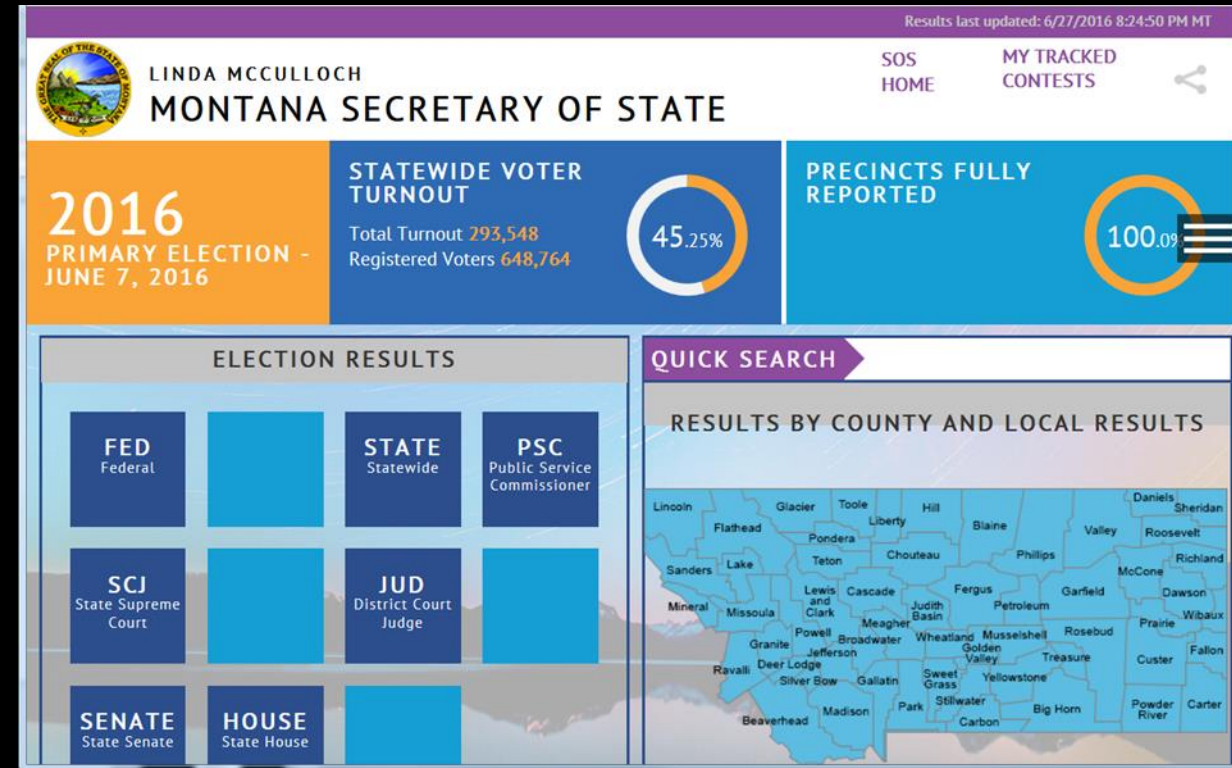
- ★ Pressure from stringers to provide results before they are entered into state system:

- ★ The state system affects all voters in every corner of the state, and national news organizations, so resources must be used FIRST to upload/enter results in state system.

- ★ Monitor results

- ★ Odd situations – unusual results?

## ELECTION 2016



# ELECTION 2016

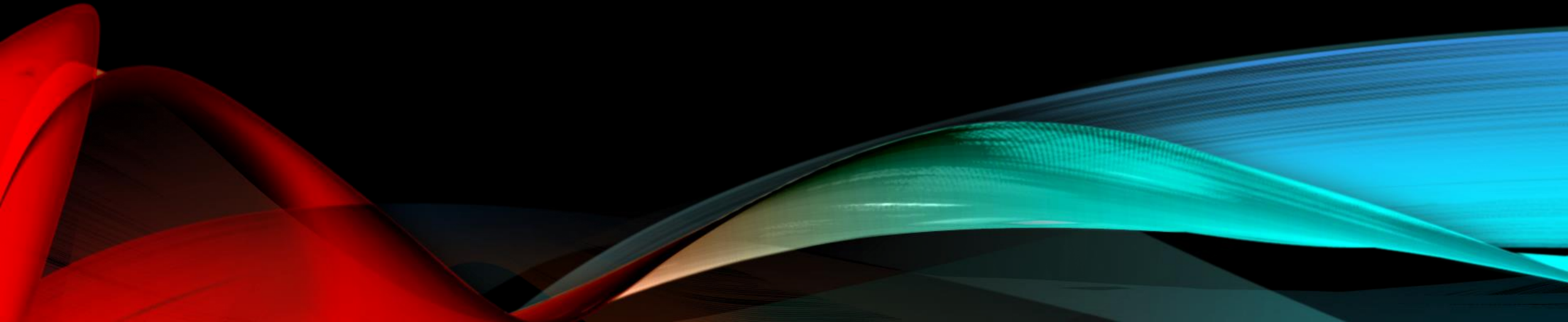
## 2016 – Even with Preparation and Planning, Policies and Procedures - A Perfect Storm?

- ★ “Open” Presidential office
- ★ Controversial ballot issues on ballot
- ★ Heightened interest from the public and the media
- ★ Top state officials on the ballot
- ★ More uninformed, inactive, transient/homeless voters want to participate
- ★ All of these things can add up to a stressful and chaotic election year – prepare and plan – have policies and procedures!



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# ELECTION SECURITY – A BIG TOPIC FOR 2016





# ELECTION 2016

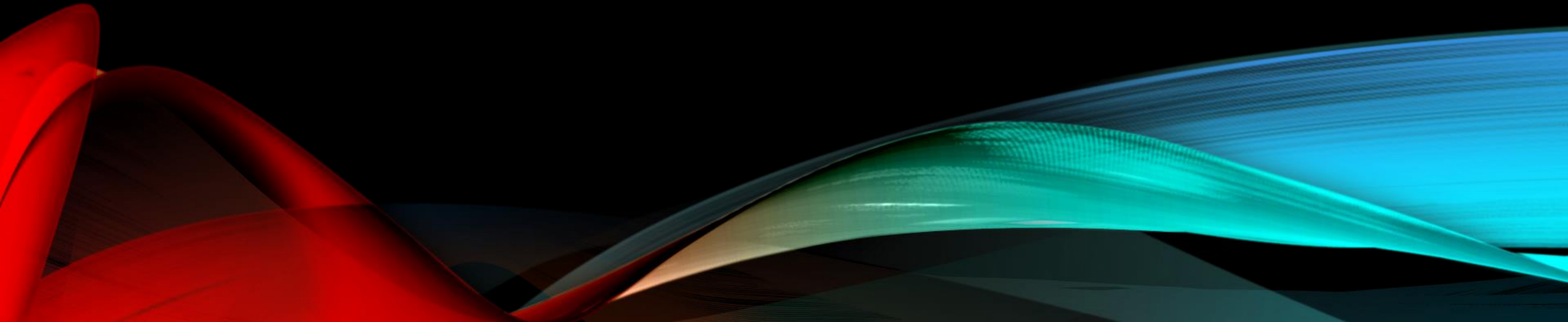
## Election Security

- ★ The security of the election is in YOUR hands – follow these mandatory security requirements!
  - ★ Monitor MT Votes access, make sure your authorized users have secure and private passwords
  - ★ Use only wired connection for MT Votes access
  - ★ Follow the “Uniform Ballot and Voting System Procedures Guide”
  - ★ Keep voting equipment, ballots in secure location with limited access; access only for authorized election staff
  - ★ Use tamper-resistant seals
  - ★ Use the chain-of-custody and seal log form
  - ★ Do required equipment testing, including election day testing
  - ★ Reconcile your ballots using prescribed reconciliation forms



ELECTION 2016

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE



# ELECTION 2016



Postal Service is acutely aware of their critical role in elections.

Neither the postal service or our offices wants the story of Election 2016 to be that ballots didn't get delivered.

Postal Service has done several trainings in July for USPS staff regarding election mail.

Communication with USPS is key to making sure mail process goes smoothly.

# ELECTION 2016



UNITED STATES  
POSTAL SERVICE®

Communicate with local post offices:

- Mailing date and estimated volume of mailings
- Election date
- Sample mailer
- Any changes you've made to design, size, etc.
- Coordinate holding of ballots the week of election
- Coordinate ballot pickups on election day
- Make sure instructions regarding insufficient postage are clear
  - The USPS has a policy that ballots are never sent back to the voter, but in reality it could be happening in some local jurisdictions.

# ELECTION 2016



## Mail Tips

- Make sure the “official election mail” logo is on all mailings



- Use color coding to increase the visibility of the ballot in the mail stream





# ELECTION 2016

Mail Tips

ALWAYS use Tag 191

Makes it easy to know  
that the mail is ballots





# ELECTION 2016



New delivery standards!

The USPS recently came out with a uniform national message:

**“The Postal Service recommends that voters mail ballots *one week* before the due date to account for any unforeseen events or weather issues and to allow for timely receipt and processing by election officials”**

# ELECTION 2016



An online repository has been established for election mail issues that will capture basic information regarding the postal issue and report it directly to USPS:

[www.electionmail.org](http://www.electionmail.org)



UNITED STATES  
POSTAL SERVICE®

# ELECTION 2016

Sample:

What type of problem are you reporting? \*

- ☐ Delivery delay
- ☐ Damaged mail
- ☐ Lost mail
- ☐ Undeliverable/returned mail
- ☐ Addressing/CASS/NCOA
- ☐ Rate/class qualification
- ☐ Postmark/cancellation
- ☐ Misdirected mail
- ☐ Intelligent Mail tracking
- ☐ Communication/responsiveness
- ☐ Other

[www.electionmail.org](http://www.electionmail.org)

ELECTION 2016

For about one half of Montanans voting,  
**their mailbox IS their ballot box**



[www.electionmail.org](http://www.electionmail.org)

**90 days, 19 hours, 49  
minutes and 38 seconds  
till polls open**

**(46 days before ballots are sent to UOCAVA voters!)**







We believe Montana has the  
**BEST** most **DEDICATED**  
election officials in the  
nation

YOU

ALL

ROCK!